



***US Lacrosse
Strategic Plan
2002-2006***

**Presented to
US Lacrosse Board of Directors
September 14-15, 2002**

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Introduction

History of the Process

On September 23-24, 2000, the US Lacrosse Strategic Planning Committee assembled a diverse group of Board members, staff and other constituent representatives at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD to strategize the future of the organization and the sport. Thirty-eight individuals from fifteen states attended this two-day strategic planning initiative. Sente Corporation of Orlando, FL facilitated these collaborative design sessions in an effort to begin the creation of the following outcomes:

- Develop mission and vision statements that describe where US Lacrosse wants to go and who/what US Lacrosse wants to be as an organization.
- Determine the strategies and outcomes that will serve as leverage points in fulfilling the mission and vision.
- Describe these strategies and sketch practical outlines for acquisition and deployment of resources to support them.

A 68-page document, representing Sente Corp.'s synthesis of the reports and discussions during the weekend, was presented to the attendees. Ten preliminary areas of strategic concentration were identified, and a rough timetable of activities and goals was projected for each area. After some slight revision, the US Lacrosse Board of Directors adopted these areas of strategic concentration on January 14, 2001.

After a brief hiatus, a Strategic Planning Committee including both Board and staff representation was created and empowered by the US Lacrosse Board of Directors to create and present a 3-5 year strategic plan for US Lacrosse. This process, which was completed after almost 100 hours of meetings, conference calls, document review and individual assignments, included the following steps:

- Review and revise the areas of strategic concentration developed in 2000
- Compare the areas of strategic concentration with current staff prioritization plans
- Develop mission and vision statements
- Develop the general strategies for accomplishing goals and objectives for each area of strategic concentration
- Evaluate the resources necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives for each area of strategic concentration

Guiding Principles

While many considerations went into the development of this strategic plan, several are worth noting. The first reflects the importance of the primary motivation behind the creation of US Lacrosse — that much more can be accomplished for lacrosse in the long term if constituencies make the necessary sacrifices to work together for the benefit of the sport.

The second is the fact that our organization represents one sport (lacrosse) but two games (men's and women's). US Lacrosse must always respect the integrity of these two games while it strives to unify process and foster collaboration between games.

The third consideration permeates every element of this plan — the importance of regional chapters in the future development of US Lacrosse and the sport. In order for US Lacrosse to effectively deliver a growing list of US Lacrosse resources to the local level, chapters must receive greater support and be held to higher organizational standards.

Purpose of the Strategic Plan

The Vision and Mission Statements and Strategic Plan set forth on the following pages are critical to the future of US Lacrosse. The vision statement provides inspiration; the mission statement clarifies purpose; and the strategic plan recommends direction and structure, while providing a basis for measuring organizational success.

This strategic plan is intended to be used as a filter against which the US Lacrosse Board can test new and existing organizational activities over the next five years. If a particular activity does not contribute to achieving the strategic plan, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends that it be reviewed, revised and/or considered for elimination. It should be noted that the Strategic Planning Committee did not conclude that any current organizational activity should be discontinued. However, a number of activities are in need of review and should be considered for modification based on the strategic plan's recommendations.

While the Strategic Planning Committee recommends the adoption of this strategic plan as presented, it should be noted that this plan reflects existing environmental conditions and information. Opportunities may rise in the future and, if they adhere to the mission statement, can be incorporated into this strategic plan. However, no such decision should be made without the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee and/or the approval of the Board.

Funding/Resources

Because this document is being submitted in the middle of a budget year, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends that no considerable US Lacrosse budget reallocation take place until the development of the 2003-04 budget. At that time, it is suggested that the Strategic Planning Committee be granted representation on the Budget Committee in order to facilitate incorporation of the elements of the strategic plan into the 2003-4 budget. The 2003-04 budget would ideally be presented to the Board for approval with the endorsement of the Strategic Planning Committee. However, where possible and fiscally prudent, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends incorporating elements of this plan as soon as possible.

It should be noted that the Strategic Planning Committee recognizes the need to expand the number of committees in order to successfully achieve this plan. The challenge of identifying committed and qualified volunteers willing to serve on an expanding list of committees is noted. The committee also notes that a number of strategic goals within the plan require the assistance of a number of consultants with specific knowledge and expertise. While this will require some level of additional funding, it will also provide the organization with immediate access to needed resources without increasing payroll.

Next Steps – The Ongoing Role of the Strategic Planning Committee

Once this document is approved by the Board, a communication plan must be developed in order to share the broad points of the strategic plan with the US Lacrosse national membership and establish regular intervals of progress management and assessment. The Strategic Planning Committee recommends the following general time table (which is also included as part of an addendum to this document):

- November, 2002: US Lacrosse announces its five year strategic plan to the membership in a feature article in the November/December issue of Lacrosse Magazine
- December, 2002: Prioritization plans for US Lacrosse staff are completed through July 31, 2003.
- January, 2003: Strategic Planning Committee presents a preliminary progress report, including areas of budget reallocation, to the Board
- March, 2003: Strategic Planning Committee representatives are appointed to Budget Committee to facilitate incorporation of the elements of the strategic plan into the 2003-4 budget (repeat in subsequent years)
- June, 2003: The 2003-4 budget is presented to the Board by the Budget Committee with the endorsement of the Strategic Planning Committee (repeat in subsequent years)
- July, 2003: Prioritization plans for US Lacrosse staff are completed through July 31, 2004. (repeat in subsequent years)
- January, 2004: Strategic Planning Committee presents a progress report to the Board (repeat in subsequent years)

- March, 2004: US Lacrosse membership updated on progress of plan achievement in the March issue of *Lacrosse Magazine* (repeat in subsequent years)
- October, 2005: Strategic Planning Committee convenes for a facilitated session to review and assess three-year progress in achieving the plan
- September, 2006 – December, 2006: Strategic Planning Committee conducts a thorough analysis of the current US Lacrosse position and develops a new 5-year strategic plan to begin implementation in August 2007

As indicated above and in the bylaws of US Lacrosse, the Strategic Planning Committee must remain an active committee of the Board ongoing. This committee is responsible for annually assessing and reporting the progress made to achieve the plan, regularly reviewing the components of the plan based on new information and, at least every five years, developing a new strategic plan for the organization.

Progress to Date

Finally, it should be noted that several areas of strategic concentration that originally emerged as recommended priorities during this two year process have already been achieved by US Lacrosse in the course of its evolving operations and, so, have not been included in this plan. They are:

- Establish an annual national convention that incorporates all major constituencies in men's and women's lacrosse. This was achieved in January of 2002.
- Establish at least one championship that incorporated both men's and women's competitions. This was successfully achieved in May of 2001 when the men's and women's intercollegiate associate championships were held in St. Louis.
- Increase resources to market US Lacrosse and its operations to the national lacrosse community. This was partially achieved in September of 2002 when US Lacrosse created a new staff position, Director of Marketing and Chapter Relations, and hired qualified full-time staff to assume that position.

Post Script

The Strategic Planning Committee would like to thank the US Lacrosse Board of Directors for the faith and support it has shown in the committee's ability and commitment to create this plan. Additionally, the committee would like to recognize consultant GeMar Neloms for her leadership and patience in facilitating this entire process. Her expertise was essential to our process and her passion served as inspiration for us all.

Mission

The mission of US Lacrosse is to ensure a unified and responsive organization that develops and promotes the sport by providing services to its members and programs to inspire participation, while preserving the integrity of the game.

Vision

We envision a future which offers people everywhere the opportunity to discover, learn, participate in, enjoy, and ultimately embrace the shared passion of the lacrosse experience.

Areas of Strategic Concentration

- I. Grow the Sport and US Lacrosse Membership
- II. Promote United Front of Men, Women and Youth
- III. Increase Funding Revenues, Corporate Partnerships/Sponsorships
- IV. Recruit, Develop and Retain Coaches and Officials
- V. Emphasize Safety and Sportsmanlike Behavior
- VI. Enhance Communications with Members
- VII. Support and Develop the National Staff and Volunteers
- VIII. Enhance Marketing and Branding
- IX. Accelerate Olympic Development Plan
- X. Streamline Organizational Structure

Areas of Strategic Concentration and Related Goals

I. Grow the Sport and US Lacrosse Membership

- a. Goal: Create and deliver a concentrated and coordinated growth assistance program (GAP) to targeted areas
- b. Goal: Expand efforts to establish greater socio-economic, racial and geographic participant diversity
- c. Goal: Develop a lacrosse curriculum for institutions and community based organization

Growth of the sport is fundamental to accomplish the mission and vision of US Lacrosse. Lacrosse offers unique benefits that our community wants to share beyond its current reach. Our stated goals will help bring lacrosse to new people and new areas and increase US Lacrosse membership to help us better serve the sport.

II. Promote United Front of Men, Women and Youth

- a. Goal: US Lacrosse men's and women's councils meet jointly

US Lacrosse has made great strides in establishing an integrated organization. There remains room for further commitment to more fully unify US Lacrosse. The Men's and Women's Councils/Committees should meet to benefit from shared knowledge and expertise. Only through such cooperative efforts can unification be achieved.

III. Increase Funding Revenues, Corporate Partnerships/Sponsorships

- a. Goal: Organization-wide corporate partnership program established
Objective: Confirm 8 national, non-lacrosse corporate sponsors by 2007
- b. Goal: Collaborate with US Lacrosse Foundation to initiate Capital campaign by 2005
- c. Goal: \$500,000 raised from Annual Fund by the end of 2005

Membership dues alone will not sufficiently fund the expansion of the sport. US Lacrosse has an immediate need to create larger and more consistent funding resources.

IV. Recruit, Develop and Retain Coaches and Officials

- a. Goal: Develop mentor program models for new officials
- b. Goal: US Lacrosse maintains national standardized certification programs for officials
- c. Goal: Launch education initiatives to attract new officials
- d. Goal: Develop a model junior officiating program
Objective: To develop a pool of certified high school aged officials to assist in officiating youth play (U15 and below)
- e. Goal: Develop and establish a national standardized education program for coaches

Every constituency within the lacrosse community has expressed concern over a shortage of qualified officials and coaches. The Strategic Plan addresses this concern by providing a framework for the increased recruitment of officials and the education of both officials and coaches.

V. Emphasize Safety and Sportsmanlike Behavior

- a. Goal: US Lacrosse establishes a common "core values" Code of Conduct that is signed by all members
Objective: Code of Conduct is endorsed by each representative Council by 2003
Objective: Code of Conduct signed by all members in 2004 membership year
- b. Goal: Expand the US Lacrosse web site to include the most comprehensive and relevant sports science and safety information
- c. Goal: US Lacrosse supports efforts to conduct and publish injury research at the youth and high school levels

To ensure the integrity and progress of the sport, a fundamental objective of US Lacrosse is to see our games played in a safe and sportsmanlike environment. US Lacrosse will provide access to updated sports science and safety information as well as establishing a code of conduct for all members to embrace.

VI. Enhance Communications with Members

- a. Goal: Launch broadly functional, easily accessible web site
- b. Goal: Initiate on-line membership registration
- c. Goal: Evaluate effectiveness of current publications and determine additional publication needs

Members are the most vital and fundamental component of US Lacrosse. Enhanced communications with members will build on their connection to the sport to actively engage them in the organization.

VII. Support and Develop the National Staff and Volunteers

- a. Goal: Evaluate staffing needs and staff structure, job descriptions and physical plant; implement identified needs
- b. Goal: Increase efforts to recruit and engage volunteers to serve at the national level of US Lacrosse

US Lacrosse has grown exponentially since its inception in 1998. The organization is committed to improve the efficacy of the staff and volunteer structures. Staff members and volunteers should be adequately guided and supported in order to best serve our members and develop the sport.

VIII. Enhance Marketing and Branding

- a. Goal: US Lacrosse establishes dedicated marketing staff
- b. Goal: Develop marketing and branding strategies that reflect the US Lacrosse vision and mission
- c. Goal: Internet-based Lacrosse TV is established

An effective marketing plan for US Lacrosse must be developed and implemented so that the organization can better help the games of lacrosse achieve their maximum growth.

IX. Accelerate Olympic Development Plan

- a. Goal: Initiate a strategic plan for achieving International Olympic Committee and United States Olympic Committee recognition

Olympic participation is universally recognized as the highest achievement for any sport and athlete. To be recognized represents an invaluable opportunity for lacrosse within the United States and throughout the world. As a result of the relative resources and participation within the United States, US Lacrosse is uniquely positioned to lead efforts to initiate this strategic goal.

X. Streamline Organizational Structure

- a. Goal: US Lacrosse reviews all details of organizational merger
 - Objective: Review all Chapter documents for alignment with US Lacrosse guidelines
 - Objective: Review US Lacrosse merger agreements
 - Objective: Communicate findings to the board
- b. Goal: US Lacrosse Men and Women's division structures are operational and efficient
 - Objective: Establish a Men's division
 - Objective: Review Women's division
- c. Goal: Establish an on-going organizational performance evaluation procedure
 - Objective: US Lacrosse staff issue first organizational performance reports

US Lacrosse was created to establish one unified organization that was better positioned to serve the needs of lacrosse. The time has now come to fine tune the structure, allowing US Lacrosse to fully realize the benefits of the merger while maximizing efficiency and synergy within the organization.

Time Line

- 9/2000:** US Lacrosse Conducted a strategic planning session in Annapolis, MD, and began strategic planning process by reviewing strengths, weakness and opportunities of US Lacrosse and general areas of proposed focus.
- 1/2001:** Areas of Strategic Concentration were defined from 9/2000 work and approved by Board for development.
- 1/2002:** Board formally approved moving forward in the development of a formal strategic plan through the formation and recommendations of a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC).
- 2/2002:** First In-person work session and follow-up activities of SPC resulted in the development of organizational vision and mission.
- 3/2002:** Teleconference meeting and subsequent assignments/reports resulted in: clarifying, defining and refining definitions/meaning of previously developed goals listed reflected under Areas of Strategic Concentration; reviewing results of 2000 Board and staff survey re: strategic priorities; developing and streamlining current set of goals and related objectives with previously developed goals.
- 4/2002:** Teleconference meeting to review current strategic planning process; original schedule for final work product and recommendation-based presentation to the board postponed.
- 4/2002:** Began draft action plans for Areas of Strategic Concentration and related goals.
- 5/2002-7/2002:** Reviewed current staff prioritization plans and compared with Areas of Strategic Concentration and related goals. Continued draft Action Plans: refined, analyzed in conjunction with staff plans and organizational resources, approved as priority to pursue or reject for strategic plan time-frame.
- 6/2002:** Committee presentation to Board on work-to-date/status of SPC activity
- 7/2002:** Action Plans completed (includes final review of staff plans comparison); Developed descriptor sentence(s) of goals' contribution to overall strategic direction, mission and goal of organization
- 8/2002:** Present approved Goals/Action Plans to key non-SPC represented parties for feedback and recommendations
- 8/2002:** Written draft of strategic plan complete
- 9/2002:** Draft provided to full Board; Formal presentation with recommendations presented to full board; Board formal approval of plan
- 11/2002:** US Lacrosse announces its 3-5 year strategic plan to the membership in a feature article in the November/December issue of *Lacrosse Magazine*
- 1/2003:** Strategic Planning Committee presents a preliminary progress report, including areas of budget reallocation, to the Board
- 3/2003:** Strategic Planning Committee representation appointed to Budget Committee to facilitate incorporation of the elements of the strategic plan into the 2003-4 budget (repeat in subsequent years)
- 6/2003:** The 2003-4 budget is presented to the Board by the Budget Committee with the endorsement of the Strategic Planning Committee (repeat in subsequent years)
- 1/2004:** Strategic Planning Committee presents a progress report to the Board (repeat in subsequent years)
- 3/2004:** US Lacrosse membership updated on progress of plan achievement in the March issue of *Lacrosse Magazine* (repeat in subsequent years)
- 10/2005:** Strategic Planning Committee convenes for a facilitated session to review three-year progress in achieving the plan
- 9/2006-12/2006:** Strategic Planning Committee conducts a thorough analysis of the current US lacrosse position and develops a new 5-year strategic plan

US Lacrosse Strategic Planning Committee Members

Feffie Barnhill • Wilmington, Del.

David Burn • Nashville, Tenn.

Jack Couch • Norwalk, Conn.

Pat Dillon • Beltsville, Md.

Peter Jenkins • Hunt Valley, Md.

Brian Logue • Abingdon, Md.

Tessa Pagones • Westminster, Md.

Steve Stenersen • Timonium, Md.

John Urban • Sudbury, Mass.

Joan Wagner • West Chester, Pa.

Facilitator: GeMar Neloms